

# Infection Control Micro-Learns

## User Guide



### About the Micro-Learns

The Project Firstline *Infection Control Micro-Learns* are a series of guided infection control discussions that provide brief, on-the-job educational opportunities. Each micro-learn focuses on a single infection control topic and connects infection control concepts to immediate, practical value. Healthcare workers can easily apply the key points to their daily work and perform the recommended actions to keep germs from spreading.

### Using the Micro-Learns

The micro-learns can be incorporated into existing opportunities where groups of healthcare workers gather, such as pre-shift “huddles” or team meetings. The sessions should be led or facilitated by an experienced team member with infection control expertise.

**Each micro-learn package includes an adaptable discussion guide for the facilitator and one job aid.**



**Discussion Guide.** The discussion guide is not a script. Facilitators are encouraged to adapt the guide for their audience by incorporating relevant and practical questions and ideas. For instance, facilitators can connect the content to the audience’s job duties, facility-specific cases or issues, resources and points of contact, or other information.



**Job Aid.** The one-page, visual job aid helps to reinforce the key messages of the micro-learn. Facilitators are encouraged to make the job aid available after the micro-learn session, such as in digital or hard copy form.

### Notes for Facilitators

- Before presenting a micro-learn, check the policies and protocols at your facility and adapt the content accordingly.
- Build on your knowledge, experience, and awareness to connect the content to local context or relevant recent events so that your audience can apply the concepts confidently.
- The micro-learns reinforce infection control concepts when risks are observed in patients or in the patient environment, not necessarily in visitors or other staff members.
- Remind your audience that if they see a patient in distress—e.g., with shortness of breath, bleeding, or otherwise at risk of immediate harm—they should respond to the emergency according to facility protocols.

## Rash Micro-Learn Discussion Guide:

# What to do when you see a patient with a rash

Use the talking points below and accompanying job aid to engage your team in short, focused discussion. Adapt to meet your needs.

### 1. Introduce the topic

Share key information about the topic that your audience should **know and connect to your local context**:

- A rash is abnormal skin that is usually red, irritated, or broken and may have bumps, flat spots, or blisters.
- A rash can be caused by many things, including germs that can be spread by touch. You may not be able to tell what has caused the rash just by looking at it.
- Many viral infections can be associated with a rash and can spread to other people or to the environment.
  - Some viruses, such as chickenpox and measles, travel long distances in the air and can easily infect people who are not immune to them.
  - These viruses can spread when the infected person breathes or if the rash is disturbed, such as by scratching or rubbing, which can send infected fluid or debris into the air.
- Some rashes are not caused by an infection but by an injury or an allergic reaction like poison ivy or a bug bite. These rashes can still contain germs that can be spread by touch.

### 2. Expand on the topic

Share information about what your audience should **do**:

- Don't touch the patient's rash if you don't have to. If you have to touch a rash, use gloves. Regardless of the cause, any rash is a vulnerable area where germs can enter the body.
- If it's possible to cover the rash, it's often best to do so, but there are some exceptions. This decision is made by the clinical team.
- Germs can spread from a rash to anything that touches it, so make sure to clean and disinfect surfaces and properly handle linens that have touched the rash.
- If the rash is accompanied by cough and congestion, consider the possibility that it is caused by a virus that spreads through the air, and separate the patient from others. Consult with the clinical and infection prevention teams, and consider whether additional infection control actions are necessary, such as putting the patient in a separate room with the door closed.

### 3. Discuss with your team

Find out how your audience feels about the topic. Sample questions include:

- What do you usually do when you see a rash? Do you worry that you might catch something? How do you protect yourself and your patient? When might you call for help or assistance?
- Do you have all the tools and information you need to do your job safely?
- As a team, how can we help each other take the right infection control actions when we see a rash to keep germs from spreading?

### 4. Wrap up and reinforce

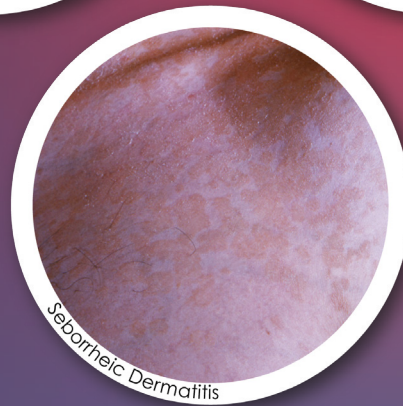
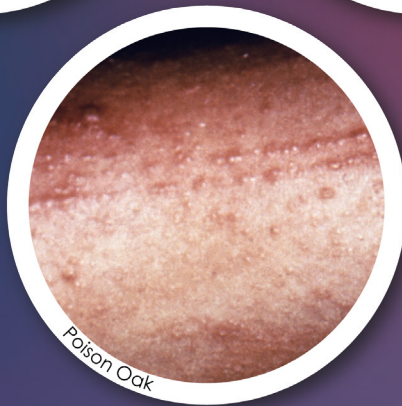
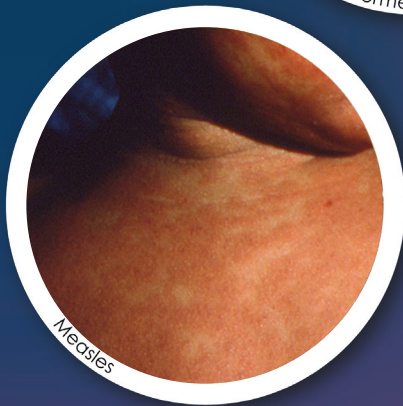
Reinforce key takeaways:

- Some rashes are caused by germs that can spread to other people or the environment. You may not be able to tell what's causing the rash just by looking.
- Whatever the cause, broken or irritated skin is a vulnerable area for the patient. Treat it carefully.

Share related facility-specific information and cue to follow-up opportunities:

- Connect content with information such as the facility's process for isolation precautions, recent cases, examples of patients with rashes, or other relevant information.
- Share reminders, prompts, and opportunities for further learning as appropriate, including the Project Firstline website at [www.cdc.gov/projectfirstline](http://www.cdc.gov/projectfirstline).

# You don't always know which rashes are infectious.



Source for Images:  
CDC Public Health  
Image Library (PHIL)

Because you can't always tell what causes a rash, you should always take the following actions to protect patients and yourself from the spread of germs.



Treat broken or irritated skin with care; it's a vulnerable place where germs can enter a patient's body.



Use gloves if you have to touch the rash, to prevent germs from spreading.



Clean and disinfect things that the patient has touched.

**Learn More**

Germs Live on the Skin Infographic: <https://bit.ly/3OEGTty>

Gloves and Gowns Session Plan: <https://bit.ly/44bGkNz>

Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Session Plan: <https://bit.ly/3KBBTVF>